

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please enter the replacement sheet of drawings (Figure 2) that are attached to this Amendment.

REMARKS

The Office Action of October 24, 2008 has been received and its contents carefully considered.

The present Amendment revises the claims to make improvements of a formal nature and to refer to "image information" rather than "additional information". The Amendment also adds a new dependent claim to further protect the invention. Claims 1 and 16 are independent.

The Office Action asserts that the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement filed on December 31, 2007 is improper. However, this assertion is incorrect. The supplemental document noted above provides information regarding the relevance of previously cited documents. The previously cited documents have been considered by the Examiner, as made of record in the current Action. The relevance information provided in the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement was therefore intended to assist the Examiner in considering previously cited references, and provides no additional subject matter in itself that requires consideration by the Examiner.

The Office Action objects to the abstract, title and the claims for informalities. The abstract, title and claims are amended to obviate these objections. Therefore, withdrawal of the above objections to the abstract, title, and the claims is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to the Drawings as containing an improper reference numeral "16." Fig. 2 is amended to obviate this objection. Withdrawal of the objection to Fig. 2 is therefore respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. First, the Office Action asserts that the term "additional information" is

indefinite. The above term has been amended to “image information” in claims 1-16.

Second, the Office Action asserts that the dependency of claim 10 is ambiguous, as it is a system claim dependent from an apparatus claim. However, this assertion is incorrect.

Claim 10 is of proper dependent form, as it recites a system including an apparatus as recited in claim 8. The claim is not indefinite simply because an element of that claim, and not the entire structure of that claim, is recited in a claim from which it depends. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claim 10, and all of the claims from which it depends, including claims 11-15 and 18, are definite.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the above rejection of claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §112 are respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 10-13, 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2001-218030 to Oki. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 recites, among other features, an image acquisition component which acquires input image data from a printed medium in which image information is embedded, and embedding the new image information into image data obtained by removing the image information from the input image data. These features are further discussed by way of example on page 14, lines 2-7 of the disclosure of this application.

In contrast, Oki teaches that a picture with copyright information is scheduled for printing, as discussed in the abstract of Oki. In other words, Oki schedules the transfer of digital picture and copyright data to a printed medium. Therefore, the reference cannot reasonably be considered to teach, or to have suggested, an image acquisition component which acquires input image data from a printed medium in which image information is embedded, as recited in claim 1.

Further, Oki fails to teach the manner in which picture information and copyright information is processed in order to produce printing control of the resulting picture. Therefore, the reference cannot reasonably be considered to teach, or to have suggested, embedding the new image information into image data obtained by removing the image information from the input image data, as recited in claim 1.

Therefore, the applied Oki reference cannot reasonably be considered to teach, or to have suggested, the combination of features recited in independent claim 1. Independent claim 16 recites features similar to those recited in claim 1, and is patentably distinct over the Oki reference for at least the same reasons as those give above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 2-15, 17-19, and added claim 20 are also allowable, at least for their dependence on allowable independent claims 1 and 16, as discussed above, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

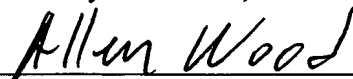
Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending rejections of the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103 are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

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Date

AW/ARK/klc

Respectfully submitted,


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